

Proclamation 4716 of January 22, 1980

American Heart Month, 1980

By the President of the United States of America

A Proclamation

Diseases of the heart and blood vessels remain our Nation's leading cause of death and disability and one of our most serious health problems. Collectively, cardiovascular diseases affect more than 40 million Americans, visiting partial or complete disability on several millions of them and causing nearly 980,000 deaths each year.

Since 1948, this Nation has been engaged in a concerted effort to acquire new knowledge about the cardiovascular system and the diseases that afflict it; to disseminate that knowledge to the research and medical communities and to the general public; and to mobilize resources, facilities, and research and medical manpower toward the goal of reducing illness, disability, and premature death from cardiovascular disorders.

Leading this national effort have been the National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute—a federal agency—and the American Heart Association, supported by private contributions; but it has been a cooperative endeavor involving the participation of a great many agencies and groups and enjoying the confidence and continued support of the American people.

Widespread application of research and clinical advances stemming from this effort is having substantial and salutary effects on cardiovascular disease mortality rates, which have declined by 34 percent since 1950. These mortality-rate decreases extend across the whole spectrum of cardiovascular diseases and, in most categories, have accelerated during recent years.

Since 1968, for example, the mortality rate for coronary heart disease has declined by 26 percent and that for stroke by 37 percent. These reductions represent more than three hundred thousand lives saved each year, because these two disorders account for nearly 84 percent of all cardiovascular disease deaths.

Recognizing the need for all Americans to help in the continuing battle against cardiovascular disease, the Congress, by joint resolution approved December 30, 1963 (77 Stat. 843; 26 U.S.C. 169b) has requested the President to issue annually a proclamation designating February as American Heart Month.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, JIMMY CARTER, President of the United States of America, do hereby proclaim the month of February, 1980, as American Heart Month. I invite the Governors of the States, the appropriate officials of all other areas subject to the jurisdiction of the United States and the American people to join with me in reaffirming our commitment to the search for new ways to prevent, detect and control cardiovascular disease in all its forms.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this twenty-second day of January, in the year of our Lord Nineteen hundred and eighty, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and fourth.

JIMMY CARTER